ぢゅん子
Junko Presents
お護りします、どこまでも
Omamori Shimasu
Doko-mademo
CHARA COMICS

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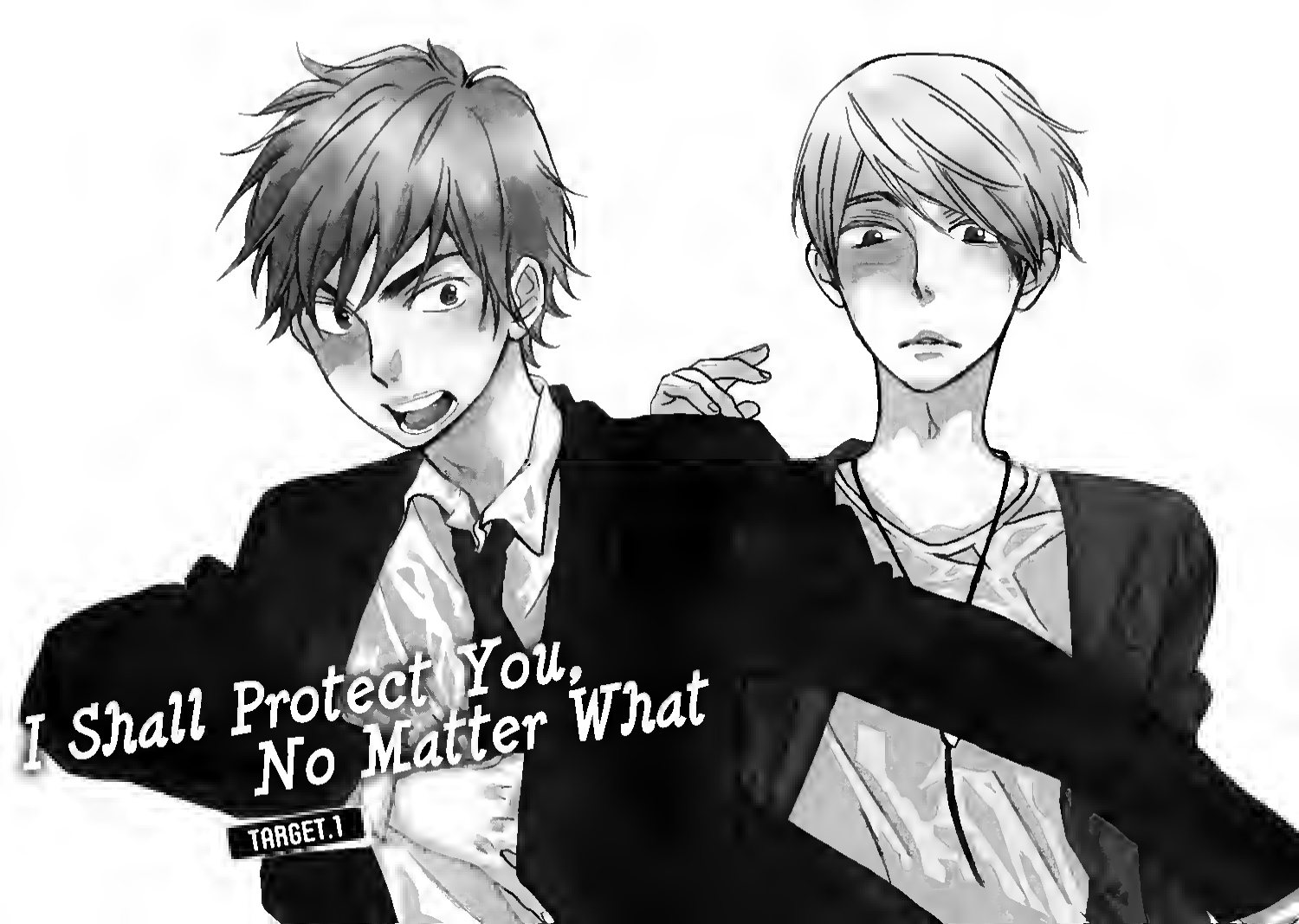
CHARA COMICS

I wonder if there's really such a thing...
WH...
WHAT...?
...as a truth that shows itself amidst lies...

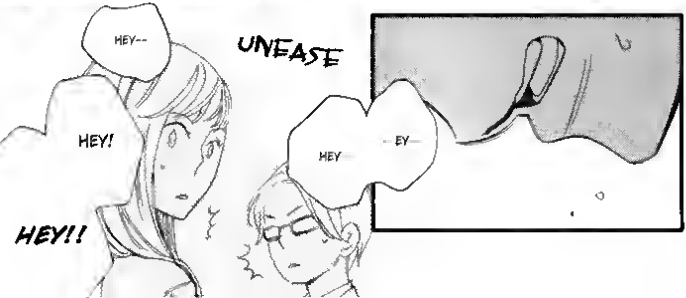

I Shall Protect You, No Matter What
TARGET.1

We're now
CLOSED
flutter
flutter
HUH...?
EH?!

The number you have dialed is no longer in service.
PHONE! I SHOULD JUST CALL THEM...!
Ah!
WAIT... WHAT'S GOING ON HERE...?!
Wha
quiver
tremble
Wh
CLOSED
flutter
flutter
SHOCK
NO WAY...
N--
What kind of crappy joke is this?!
For my new job to already be out of business is just...!

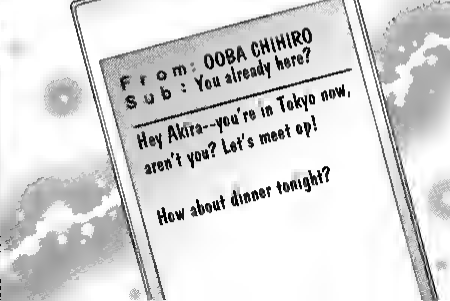
...just figures!
This...

What the hell is going on?! I've been canned before I even started work?!
You've gotta be kidding!
The dorms I was supposed to live in are closed down too?!
I've gotta go back home the same day I finally arrive in Tokyo?!


HEY--
HEY!
HEY!!
UNEASE
HEY
EY

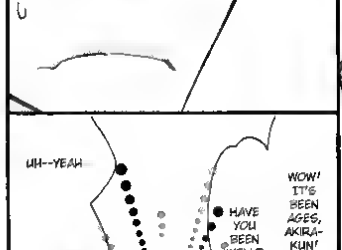
GIVE ME A FUCKING BREAK!!
I MADE SUCH A HUGE DEAL ABOUT LEAVING THE BOONIES AND NOW I HAVE TO GO BACK?!
I HAVEN'T EVEN GOTTEN THE SLIGHTEST TASTE OF LIFE IN THE BIG CITY YET!!

BEEP
BEEP
BEEEP
BEEP
OH--
A TEXT!
What was that?
What's going on?


From: OOBA CHIHIRO
Sub: You already here?
Hey Akira--you're in Tokyo now, aren't you? Let's meet up!
How about dinner tonight?

Ah!
Hello, Chihiro?
It's me! Akira!!
M--MY SAVIOR HAS ARRIVED!

He looks totally hot, don't you think??
Whoa!
mur mur
mur mur
UMM...
THIS—IS WHERE WE WERE SUPPOSED TO MEET YEAH?
WHAT A CROWD


UH--YEAH
WOW! IT'S BEEN AGES, AKIRA-KUN!
HAVE YOU BEEN WELL?
GEEZ, YOU'RE HUGE NOW!
HUH?

AM I?
I think we look about the same
YEAH--I COULDN'T TELL FROM JUST PICTURES!
YOU USED TO BE WAY SMALLER THAN ME!
THAT 'IKEMEN AURA' JUST OOZES OFF OF HIM
HAHA!

AKIRA-KUN!

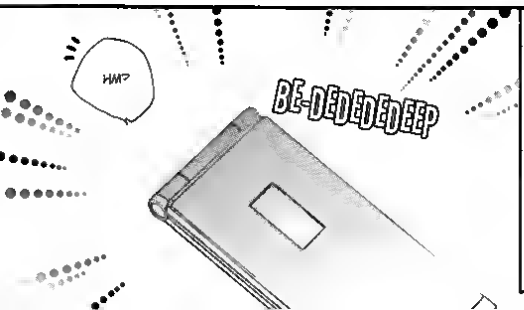
WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER SINCE WE WERE 10 YEARS OLD HUH...
I'M REALLY HAPPY!
SHOCK
I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE YOU ALL THE TIME NOW THAT YOU'LL BE LIVING HERE...!
HUH?
A--
ABOUT THAT... YOU SEE...
Bow
LOW
I'M BEGGING YOU, CHIHIRO!
I NEED THE BIGGEST FAVOR OF MY LIFE!!

HEY...
I'M BEGGING YOOOUUU!
WAI--WHAT?!
WHAT'S WRONG AKIRA-KUN?!
STAND UP, STAND UP!
JUST IGNORE HIM
BUT...
WHO THE HELL IS THAT...?
HMPH...
IT'S BEST NOT TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THAT BRAT.

So...
One month later...
Wake
.....
MORNING HUH...
SLUGGISH
AH--GOOD MORNING!
PERFECT TIMING!
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO LEAVE FOR SCHOOL

RIGHT
AND FEEL FREE TO USE THE MONEY OVER THERE IF YOU NEED IT FOR SOMETHING
KAY.
THERE'S PLENTY OF FOOD, SO PLEASE HELP YOURSELF
LEAVE IT TO ME!
WELL I'M OFF!
I'LL BE COUNTING ON YOU AGAIN TODAY!
PIZZA
YUM

I am by no means ....
...a NEET now.
I'm this house's SECURITY GUARD!
serious
Note: NEET stands for (young people) 'not in education, employment, or training'.



I am by no means slacking off!

STAB
...!!
From: KANADE
Sub: Morning! —
Today we had gym first thing in the morning. I'm so tiiiired! But I'll do my best this afternoon!
Work hard at your job, Onichan!
slacking off...!!
Little sister
HNG
collapse
NGH
UGH
I swear I'm not
You're a slacker, Takanashi Akira
Sigh
...except I totally am...
You're nothing more than A MOOCH right now.

Back then
After listening to my explanation, Chihiro said
THAT SOUNDS ROUGH!
SURE, I DON'T MIND!
COME STAY AT MY PLACE FOR A WHILE
OKAY?
TA DA!
WE'RE ON THE TOP FLOOR!
This way!
EH?!
TOP... FLOOR?!
YOU CAN HAVE THIS WHOLE ROOM!
NO ONE USES IT
USE IT HOWEVER YOU LIKE!
OH RENT?
IT'S FINE!
YOU CAN PAY ME BACK WHEN YOU GET BACK ON YOUR FEET. DON'T WORRY!
I COOK FOR MYSELF A LOT!
BUT IT'S BORING TO EAT ALONE, SO LET'S EAT TOGETHER!

A
R
G
H
HE'S SPOILING ME ROTTEN!!
HE'S SO INSANELY TOLERANT!
I'd intended to find a new job and leave immediately,
but I kept giving in to his kindness
and one thing led to another...
.....
BUT THIS IS TOTALLY NOT GOOD AT ALL!
HUH? YOU'VE GOT AN INTERVIEW?
TOMORROW?
REALLY?

HUH?!
CLATTER
AND IT SOUNDS LIKE THEY'VE GOT A DORM SETUP TOO, SO I'LL...
BUT-- WHY NOT STAY HERE AND ROOM WITH ME?
YEAH, 'S JUST A PART-TIME GIG.
I FIGURE I CAN AT LEAST EARN MY FOOD EXPENSES.
I CAN'T EVEN AFFORD HALF OF THE RENT ON THIS PLACE!
EH? BUT...
WELL, REALLY IT'S MORE--
I JUST WANT YOU TO STAY BECAUSE I LIKE LIVING WITH YOU

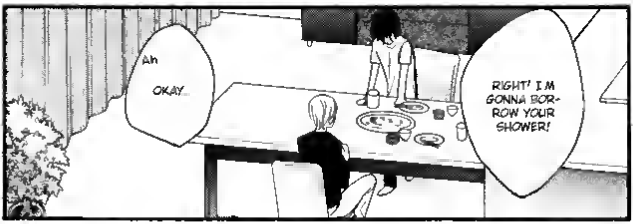
...YOU'RE A REALLY WEIRD GUY, YOU KNOW?
HUH? HOW SO?
WHAT'S THE POINT IN BEING SO NICE TO ME...?
I MEAN--I REALIZE I'VE GOT NO PLACE SAYING THAT KIND OF THING SEEING AS I'M IN YOUR DEBT AND ALL...
THE POINT? COME ON...
YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND AFTER ALL!
IF YOU'RE IN TROUBLE, THEN OF COURSE I WANT TO HELP!
The way Chihiro and I met... ...was a little weird.
JIICHAN!
THERE'S SOMETHIN' STUCK IN THE TREE!
BALLOON?

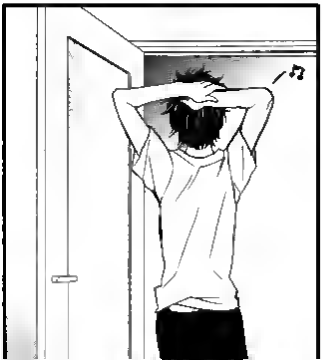
I WONDER WHERE IT'S FROM...
OOH A LETTER, HUH
tug tug
BE CAREFUL UP THERE, AKIRA!
I'LL BE FIIIINE!
THERE'S SOMETHIN' STUCK TO THE BALLOON!

Dear whoever finds this,
My name is Ooba Chihiro and I live in Tokyo
I hope we can become good friends!

So we started to exchange letters...
HUH? THIS IS FROM TOKYO?
THAT WAS QUITE A JOURNEY!
I'M GONNA WRITE HIM A LETTER!
I SEE!
WHOA!

I forget how it happened, but he came to stay at me house once
NICE TO MEET YOU!!
I'M OOBA CHIHIRO!
He stayed for 3 days before going home
Those 3 days were the only time we ever met face to face
Yup
Just 3 days
WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT THE ONLY TIME WE'VE EVER MET BEFORE WAS THAT ONE TIME WHEN WE WERE 10
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT
So...
OTHER THAN THAT, ALL WE DID WAS TEXT EACH OTHER NOW AND THEN





I'M NOT WEIRD AT ALL

AFTER ALL...
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAVED ME
ALL RIGHT!
AKIRA!
LET'S WALK TO THE STATION TOGETHER!
step step
SURE!

SO WHERE IS THIS JOE?
OH—ONE STATION OVER.
OH WOW! THEN IT'S CLOSE!
pssh!
VROOOOM...

RATTLE
EH?
!?

MMM!
MMMPH!
WH..T THE--
Wha...
SFX SLAM
HUH?!

MMMPH!
SFX RUSTLING/THUD
What...
...happening?
Is
'That brat' ?
HEY--NO ONE MENTIONED ANYTHING ABOUT THIS GUY!
YEAH--BUT WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE HIM HERE TO MAKE A FUSS EITHER...
'Snatch' ?
WHAT DO WE DO WITH HIM?
THAT BRAT'S THE ONLY ONE WE WERE ORDERED TO SNATCH!
WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH US?!
C'MON, LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!

HEY--
YOU--!!
A--
AKIRA!!
SFX: SLAP
YOU
BRAT!
PIPE
DOWN AND
STAY PUT!

GET THE CAR GOING!
HUH?
SFX. PUNCH

NEVER UNDER-ESTIMATE A GUY RAISED IN THE MOUNTAINS!
grab
EEK!
yoink
UWAH!
AK!

Umm
Pl--please sto...
Wai--
St--
NOOOOO!!
CRACK
CRACK
ALL RIGHT, THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH!
GRAB
THUNK
SLAM
CRASH
WHACK
GYAAAA!!
PUNCH
KICK
THUD
CRUSH
Aki-ra

SHOCK
ANY MORE THAN THAT AND YOU'LL KILL THE FELLOW.
yank
LET ME GO!!
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!
FRIENDS OF THEIRS?!
WHO ARE YOU?!
WOW! HE'S A MESS!
YOU'VE REALLY GOT SOME IMPRESSIVE MOVES...

WE'RE HOSHI AND NEZU, MEMBERS OF THE OORA FAMILY'S PRIVATE SECURITY DETAIL
WE'VE COME TO PICK YOU UP, CHIHIRO-SAMA.
.....
HUH?!
TARGET 1...END

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Scans: amyused

Translation: fencer-x

Editing: fencer-x, flutterwithoutwind

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どこまでも
TARGET.2

VROOOM
Umm...
What's... going on?
Who ARE these guys?
What was that just now?!
And why am I riding in this car right now?!

AH--
UMM,
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
MY FOLKS' PLACE.
RIGHT?
WHAT DID YOU MEAN YOU'D COME TO PICK ME UP...?
THERE'S SOMETHING OF AN ISSUE YOU SEE...
AN ISSUE?
WITH WHAT?
GEEZ. JUST ASK THE MASTER IF Y'WANNA KNOW SO BADLY
I DON'T GET THIS AT ALL!
HOSHI! WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE!
OH, C'MON WHAT'S IT MATTER?
HEY CHIHIRO--

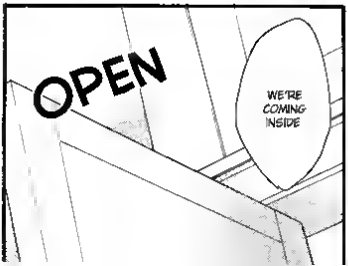
BADUMP
WAY TOO AWKWARD TO ASK...
creak...
What the hell is going on here?!

SFX: BAM!
ど
ぉん
sparkle
glitter

The SCALE of this place is just...
I knew he was some kind of rich kid, but...

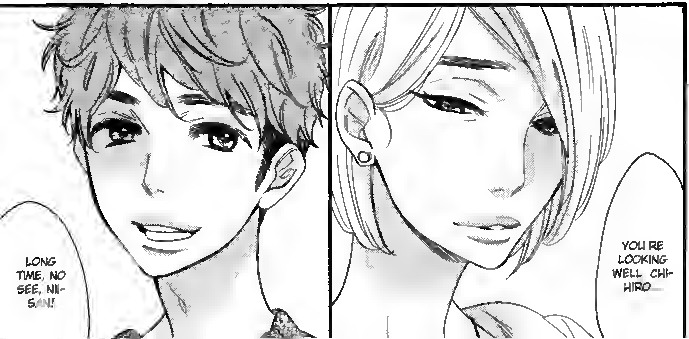
...I FEEL BETTER HAVING YOU HERE WITH ME

whisper
UMM...
ARE YOU SURE IT'S ALL RIGHT FOR ME TO BE HERE?


OPEN
WE'RE COMING INSIDE

HUH?

IT'S BEEN SOME TIME.


LONG TIME, NO SEE, NII-SAN!
YOU'RE LOOKING WELL, CHIHIRO.

This is...
gulp
...Chihiro's family?
SLAM
DON'T SPEAK OF HIM!
glance
WHAT ABOUT NIISAN?
I DON'T SEE HIM HERE
Were you spacing out?
COME NOW, SIR--YOU MUSTN'T BE LIKE THAT...
jolt
EH...?
NOT GIVEN HIS RELATION TO THE MATTER AT HAND...

HUH?!
TO PUT IT BLUNTLY
HE'S RUN AWAY FROM HOME.
ABOUT ONE WEEK PRIOR, KIICHI-SAMA CUT OFF ALL CONTACT, AND WHILE WE'RE ATTEMPTING TO TRACK HIM DOWN NOW, WE HAVE YET TO FIND HIM
R--RUN AWAY...?
Wha...?
GIVEN YOUR FATHER'S CONDITION, THERE'S THE POSSIBILITY THAT YOU, THE SECONDARY SUCCESSOR, COULD HAVE TO TAKE KIICHI'S PLACE
BUT WE MUST BE ABSOLUTELY SURE
WE'LL CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR KIICHI
WE'LL HAVE YOU FULFILL YOUR DUTY AS A MEMBER OF THE OOBA FAMILY
IS ANYTHING WRONG IN WHAT I'M SAYING?
CHIHIRO?

PROVIDED NOTHING HAPPENED
point
I'M QUITE SURE WE AGREED THAT I WOULDN'T RETURN AT LEAST UNTIL GRADUATION!
BUT--- THIS ISN'T WHAT YOU PROMISED!
BADUMP
!!
WE CAN'T HAVE ANYTHING HAPPENING TO YOU NOW OF ALL TIMES
SURELY YOU MUST HAVE UNDERSTOOD THAT YOU COULDN'T POSSIBLE PROTECT YOURSELF ON YOUR OWN RIGHT?

I'm kinda... being left compleeeeetely behind here...
Aah... ummmmm...
I DON'T GET THIS AT ALL!
Promise ???
Ooba family...?
And, the second successor...?
He ran away?
This Kuchi guy is his brother?
YES, SIR.
OJIISAN!
HOSHI-- I'LL LEAVE THE REST TO YOU
YOU'RE TO RETURN IMMEDIATELY AND VACATE THAT APARTMENT TOO
I wanna go hooooome!!

I'M NOT COMING BACK!
CHIHIRO.
But...
I'M NOT COMING BACK...
I kind of...

SFX GRUB

WHAT?
THIS IS THE FIRST I'M HEARING OF THIS...
HOSHI?
HE WAS THE ONE WHO PROTECTED ME FROM THOSE HOODLUMS EARLIER!
AND--HE'S LIVING WITH ME RIGHT NOW WORKING AS MY BODYGUARD!
I'VE ONLY HEARD HE'S CHIHIRO-SAMA'S FRIEND BUT IT WAS UNDOUBTEDLY HIM WHO FENDED OFF THE HOODLUMS
HUH?
Wait--
This guy--!
Smoothly
AND BY SHARING BOTH ROOM AND BOARD, HE WITHOUT A DOUBT IS ABLE TO COVER AREAS WHICH WE CANNOT.
OOOOH!!
What are you suggesting all of a sudden?

PUNCH
OOF!
I'M JUST--
THAT'S NOT IT!
I'm just a free-loader--
What are you...?!
Cough
ignoring
Wha...
CAN'T YOU GIVE HIM SOME TIME?
HAVE SOME PITY ON THE POOR BOY
THIS IS ALL SO SUDDEN.
COME NOW, FATHER.
CLATTER
THIS IS RIDICULOUS

AND SHINJI-SAN IS DOING BETTER NOW
KIICHI MIGHT COME BACK, YOU KNOW
PLLIS--
smile
RIGHT!
WE STILL HAVE TETSUHITO HERE!
SEE?
CHIHIRO.

...!
WAIT JUST A MINUTE!!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND A DAMN THING THAT'S GOING ON!!
FIRST OFF, WHO THE HELL ARE YOU!?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN 'NEWBIE'?!
EXPLAIN THINGS!
HERE'S HOPING WE CAN WORK WELL TOGETHER!
NEWBIE!
☆
ALL RIGHTY THEN!

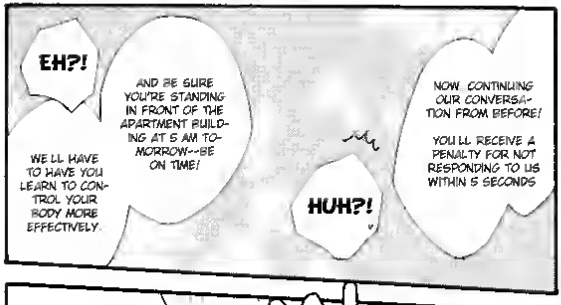
TO PUT IT SIMPLY—
...WE'RE THE 'SECRET SERVICE' AGENTS ASSIGNED TO PROTECT THE OOBA FAMILY.
BODYGUARDS, I SUPPOSE YOU COULD CALL US.
NEZU AND I ARE ASSIGNED TO CHIHIRO PROTECTING HIM 24-7—
WHICH WE'VE BEEN DOING SINCE LONG BEFORE YOU SHOWED UP—

AND YOU'LL BE JOINING OUR RANKS STARTING TODAY!
TAKANASHI AKIRA-KUN.
GOT IT?
IF SO—

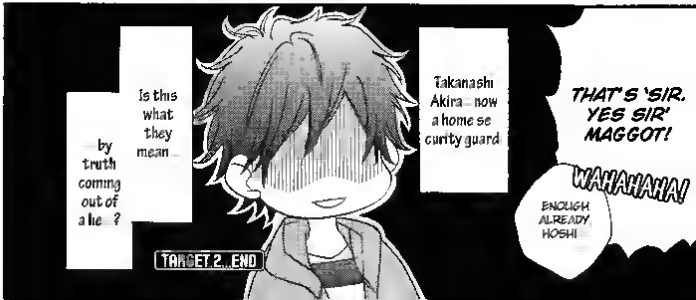
I SAID WAIT!
WA!--
THIS RADIO IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO US.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN TODAY?!
IF YOU CAN'T--
IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, YOU'RE TO CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY.
AND RESPOND TO ANY CONTACT FROM US WITHIN 5 SECONDS.
I NEVER AGREED TO ANY OF THIS!
I'M HAVING NONE OF YOUR 'I NEVER AGREED TO THIS' SHIT
grab
YOU'VE MORE THAN WORN OUT YOUR WELCOME BY NOW!
SO, WHAT'LL IT HURT TO GIVE BACK A LITTLE?
--AND LIVING THE EASY LIFE WHERE ALL YOU DO IS SIT AROUND ON YOUR ASS ALL DAY--
SAVED WHEN YOU HAD NO JOB AND NO PLACE TO LIVE AND NO WAY TO GO BACK TO YOUR LIFE IN THE BOONIES--

They seriously
have ALWAYS ??
shudder
H--how does he know ?!
PLUS...
I
IT'S THIS KIND OF FAMILY
HE'S BEEN TARGETED BY CRIMINALS SEEKING TO MAKE QUICK CASH EVER SINCE HE WAS A CHILD
HE HAS A LOT OF ENEMIES.
FROM WITHOUT...
Release

"...I FEEL BETTER HAVING YOU HERE WITH ME..."


EH?!
AND BE SURE YOU'RE STANDING IN FRONT OF THE APARTMENT BUILDING AT 5 AM TOMORROW--BE ON TIME!
WE'LL HAVE TO HAVE YOU LEARN TO CONTROL YOUR BODY MORE EFFECTIVELY.
HUH?!
NOW, CONTINUING OUR CONVERSATION FROM BEFORE!
YOU'LL RECEIVE A PENALTY FOR NOT RESPONDING TO US WITHIN 5 SECONDS

BAM!
GOT IT, MAGGOT?!
EH?
EEH?!
AAAAND THERE HE GOES WITH HIS DRILL INSTRUCTOR BIT
IF YOU UNDERSTAND THIS...
THEN FROM NOW ON, SAY 'SIR' BEFORE AND AFTER YOU SHOOT OFF YOUR MOUTH!


...by truth coming out of a lie...?
Is this what they mean...
Takanashi Akira... now a home security guard
THAT'S 'SIR, YES SIR' MAGGOT!
WAHAHAHA!
ENOUGH ALREADY, HOSHI...
TARGET 2...END

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Scans: amyused

Translation: fencer-x

Editing: fencer-x, flutterwithoutwind

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TARGET.3

stare...
stare...

block
flip
fft!
punch
swap
slam
OOH!

Oh~hoho!
whoosh
WEEELL
flip
OOP!
THIS IS NOTHING!
clap
clap
clap
clap
VERY NICE. VERY NICE!
YOU'VE GOT SOME SKILL TO HAVE COME THIS FAR IN JUST A WEEK!
ACK!
KICK
ALL RIGHT! 100 PUSH-UPS!
UGH!
Noooo!
SEETHING
YOU'RE WEAK AROUND YOUR FEET.
NEED TO WORK ON YOUR AT-TENTION!

ARE...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, AKIRA...?
EH?
WHY DO YOU ASK?
shake
tremble
WELL, YOUR ARMS...
HUH?
OH!
I'M FINE, TOTALLY FINE! THIS IS NOTHING!
JUST KINDA OVERDID IT WITH SOME PUSH-UPS!
After that...

NO WAY!
NOT HAPPENING!!
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD GO THROUGH WITH SOMETHING SO CRAZY!
I'M JUST A CIVILIAN!
I MEAN SURE HE'S TAKEN CARE OF ME AND WE'RE FRIENDS--SO IF THERE WAS SOMETHING I COULD DO...
OH BY THE WAY--ABOUT YOUR COMPENSATION...
FOR A NEW EMPLOYEE ON A PRECISE MONTHLY SALARY...
YOUR RATE WOULD BE...
BEEP BEEP BEEP
AND OF COURSE YOU'LL RECEIVE WELFARE AS WELL. ☆
PLUS, SINCE THIS IS A 24-HOUR JOB YOU'LL ALSO BE COMPENSATED FOR EMERGENCIES AND LATE-NIGHT EXPENSES.
SO, IN TOTAL, IT COMES TO...

I HOPE TO BE PRIVILEGED TO RECEIVE YOUR GUIDANCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT FROM NOW ON SIR!
RIGHT. HOPE WE CAN WORK WELL TOGETHER!
And so...
I moved up from an amateur to an official home security guard...
THANK YOU, AKIRA
GOING THROUGH ALL THIS FOR ME...
I'M SURE IT'S ROUGH
NAH, IT'S FINE, IT'S FINE!
munch munch
PLUS, IT'S A JOB!
TRUE...
YES! TAKANASHI HERE!
3 SECONDS
SHARP
WOW, THEY'VE GOT HIM TRAINED WELL.
Accompany Chihiro to classes from today on.

It'll be fine!
Just keep quiet and no one'll know
He complains when we go with him, but I'm sure he'll be fine if you go with him.
HUH? ME? ALL ALONE?
EH??
AKIRA!!
BUT--I'M NOT A STUDENT...
AKIRA!!
Takanashi will go with you to school starting today --Hoshi
SHOW
IS HE SERIOUS??
Well, good luck!
REALLY?? AWESOME!

MUR'MUR
MUR'MUR
MUR'MUR
HUH? WELL, I AM!
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HAVING FUN, CHIHIRO
I'M GOING TO SCHOOL WITH YOU, AFTER ALL!

What the heck's with that?!
I thought Chihiro was just exaggerating when he said I was his best friend...
EH?!
IT'S MY FIRST TIME WALKING AROUND CAMPUS WITH A FRIEND.
What's with this?!
GOT IT
...I'M GONNA RUN TO THE BATHROOM.
THOUGH A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE STARING AT US...
Whisper
Whisper
Wow, there's seriously not one single person interacting with us...!

JOLT
EXCUSE US...
YEAH?
THIS ISN'T GOOD
WHY IS EVERYONE SO STAND-OFFISH WHEN HE'S REALLY SOCIABLE...?
SO... WHAT EXACTLY IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OOSA-KUN? IT'S YOUR FIRST TIME COMING HERE, RIGHT?
ARE YOU FRIENDS?
YOU SEEM SO CLOSE!
WHAT'S YOUR MAJOR?
WHERE ARE YOUR CLASSES?
CHIHIRO?
WE'RE FRIENDS...
WOW, YOU'RE ON A FIRST-NAME BASIS??
YOU MUST BE GOOD FRIENDS!
HEY
IS HE ALWAYS LIKE THAT, SO
YOU KNOW...
OH, HOW HE KEEPS TO HIMSELF?
HE'S PRETTY MUCH ALWAYS BEEN ON HIS OWN. EVER SINCE HE ENROLLED. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE'VE EVER SEEN HIM TOGETHER WITH SOMEONE ELSE!
YE...!!

STX-008
CHIHIRO!
HE'S KIND OF GOT THIS AURA THAT WARNS PEOPLE NOT TO APPROACH HIM...
AND HE'S REALLY COLD ANYTIME SOMEONE TRIES TO TALK TO HIM.
YEAH... EVERYONE SAYS SO!
RICH KIDS JUST LIVE IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT WORLD...
Right?
B--BUT THAT'S NOT HOW HE IS AT ALL! HE'S REALLY NICE!
HUH? HE IS?
WE'RE HAVING A DRINKING PARTY TONIGHT--YOU TWO WANT TO COME?
I'D LOVE TO HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH HIM!
OOH, WELL THEN...!
Ooh, count me in, too!
OPEN
AKIRA...?
grin
YEAH! WE'RE GAME!

gras
C'MOON, IT'S FINE!
YOU'VE GOTTA CUT LOOSE NOW AND THEN!
SO... YOU WANT TO GO AKIRA?
HUH? WELL YEAH! TOTALLY!
AH! CHI-HIRO!
WE'RE GONNA GO OUT DRINKING WITH THESE GUYS TONIGHT!
HUH?
BUT I...
We can't have ME being his one and only friend
I've gotta give him a hand!
SO? LET'S GO!!
SURE
SOUNDS GOOD

HUH?!
A GROUP DATE?!
YOU'VE GOTTA BE SCREWING WITH ME
But why?!
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR CONCERN
JUST KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN, GEEZ
I AM KEEPING IT DOWN
BUT WE'VE GOTTA GET THE POOR GUY SOME MORE FRIENDS!
That's patently NOT keeping your head down!
HUH? BUT I DON'T GET IT...
Freeze
You still don't get it?
Chihiro's not like normal people.
SO WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO HELP HIM OUT IF I VALUED HIM AS A FRIEND!
WHETHER HE'S LIKE "NORMAL PEOPLE" OR NOT HE STILL NEEDS FRIENDS!
AND THESE ARE JUST STUDENTS FROM THE SCHOOL!
THEY'RE NOT DANGEROUS!
...Fine.
But we'll be keeping watch outside of the shop.
I KNOW YOU WILL!
WE'RE GOING WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT!
CHIHIRO WANTS TO GO. AFTER ALL, GOT IT?
SO THERE!
HOSHI?
LET'S GO
...

カラオケ ビッグエイコー
ぎゃはは!
SFX: GYAHAHAHA!

GYAHAHA!
OHMYGAWD, AKIRA-KUN! YOU'RE HI-LAAAARIOUS!
Y'THINK?? REALLY??
THEY'RE SURE HAV-ING A GOOD TIME OVER THERE...
sluurp
...
GOSH, YOU'RE JUST TOO MUCH!
WAHAHA!

SO, OOBA-KUN... ARE YOU ENJOYING YOUR-SELF HERE...?
OH, YEAH
YOU NEVER TALK TO ANY-ONE SO... I WAS KIND OF WORRIED...
I'M GLAD WE GOT THE CHANCE TO BREAK THE ICE TONIGHT!
slide //
I'D REALLY LOVE TO GET TO KNOW YOU EVEN BETTER...
...WOULD YOU, NOW?

plop
WAKE
AH!
dazed...

RUFFLE
CRAP! I FELL ASLEEP!
EH? 2 AM?!
CHIHIRO...
...he's gone?
OPEN
MAYBE HE'S IN THE TOILET?
OH! Umm AKIRA-KUN!
AH!
UMM, DO YOU KNOW WHERE CHIHIRO IS...?
OH OOBA-KUN?
DUNNO... HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE HE LEFT THE ROOM A WHILE AGO.
WHAT THE HELL? I TOLD HIM NOT TO WANDER AROUND BY HIMSELF...
tap tap
BEEP BEEP

OOPS. CRAP!
Hey
UGH, IDIOT!
C'mon!
Prrrrr
HEY.
WHY THE HELL DO YOU HAVE CHIHIRO'S CELL PHONE?
A GIRL?
HUH? OH, UH--- HE ASKED ME TO HOLD IT FOR HIM! HE ASKED ME SERIOUSLY
AND WHY WOULD HE DO THAT?
DAMNED IF I KNOW. HE GAVE IT TO ME EARLIER WHEN HE RAN OFF WITH SOME CHICK
PEOPLE USUALLY ASK OTHERS TO HOLD ON TO THEIR PHONES FOR STUFF LIKE THAT...?
MAYBE HE DIDN'T WANT TO BE DISTURBED? LIKE I WAS JUST NOW
YEAH. IT TOTALLY RUINS THE MOOD! SEE?
Don't really know
OH. I GUESS

AHAHAHAHAHA
Ooooh, I get it nooooow.
JOLT
CHARGE
YEAH,
RIGHT!
SFX: SWIPE
SFX: SMACK
EEK!
--ATCH OUT!
...!!
shift

STOMP
YOU NEED TO WATCH YOUR FEET!
FW
KYA!!
UMP
WHERE THE HELL IS CHIHIRO?!
...
NGH...

ARE YOU AWAKE?
OH!
throb
I'D WANTED TO TAKE YOU TO A PROPER HOTEL BUT YOU'RE WAY TOO HEAVY FOR ME TO CARRY!
shudder
!?
SORRY TO DO THIS IN THIS KIND OF PLACE! ♡
I JUST WANTED TO BE THERE FOR YOU SO BADLY
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN CURIOUS ABOUT YOU OOBA-KUN...
IT WAS JUST PAINFUL WATCHING HOW YOU WERE ALWAYS ON YOUR OWN
dizzy
CUT... IT OUT...
GET... YOUR HANDS OFF OF ME...

SFX: SLAM!
RIGHT, THAT'S FAAAAR ENOUGH!
EEK!
AKIRA!

SNAP
GET YOUR PAWS OFF OF CHIHIRO!
WHAT THE HELL DID YOU SLIP SOMEONE YOU CALLED A FRIEND?

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?!
I'LL SCREAM IF YOU ATTACK ME!!
AND YOU'D DATE RAPE A GUY YOU SUPPOSEDLY LOVE, HUH?!
YOU EVEN TOOK HIS CELL PHONE FROM HIM!
I JUST... I LOVE OOBA-KUN SO
KYA!!
KAWAMURA AKANE
A GRADUATE OF F GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL. CURRENTLY LIVING IN S MANSION IN TOSHIMA WARD'S IKEBUKURO 5-CHOME DISTRICT
HOMETOWN IN CHIBA CITY. WITH BOTH PARENTS, A GRANDFATHER, AND YOUNGER BROTHER. ONE MIXED-BREED DOG AND A CAT FOR A PET.
SO YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD SCALE THE SOCIAL LADDER IN A SNAP BY PULLING A FAST ONE ON AN HEIR OF THE OOBA FAMILY?
YOU ARE ONE SCARY BITCH, THINKING OF USING NOT ONLY A FRIEND BUT SOMEONE YOU'D SLEPT WITH...
I DON'T MIND YOU KNOW--GO AHEAD AND SCREAM IF YOU WANT.
THAT IS IF YOU'RE OF A MIND TO TURN THAT NETWORK YOU WERE HOPING TO GAIN INTO YOUR ENEMY.

flustered
WE'LL OVER-LOOK THIS INCIDENT...
SHUT UP AND GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE
shudder

I'M GLAD YOU CAME, HOSHI-SAN!
YOU MADE IT JUST IN TI...
DON'T GIVE ME THAT, YOU IDIOT!

GET IT?
YOU THINK HE NEEDS FRIENDS?
WELL SURE HE DOES!
BUT THOSE WHO'LL LOOK AT CHIHIRO AND IGNORE HIS FAMILY TIES ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN!
BADUMP

...AND I'M SURE CHIHIRO KNOWS THAT DAWN WELL HIMSELF...
"...KIND OF GOT THIS AURA THAT WARNS PEOPLE NOT TO APPROACH HIM."
"...RICH KIDS JUST LIVE IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT WORLD..."
"...HE'S REALLY COLD..."
You...
clench
I'LL BRING THE CAR AROUND, SO GET HIM OUTSIDE, OKAY?
Chihiro...

AKIRA
I'LL BE FINE JUST A LITTLE DIZZY...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, CHIHIRO?
lean
CHIHIRO...
I'M GOING TO PROTECT YOU.
I SWEAR IT
I'LL MAKE SURE THAT I PROTECT YOU
—HUH?

HEY HOSHI
HMM?
SO WHAT WAS WITH THE DRUG? IS HE GONNA BE ALL RIGHT THEN?
AH, YES JUST FINE
IT'S AN OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUG. ONLY DANGEROUS WHEN MIXED WITH ALCOHOL

TENDS TO MAKE YOU DROWSY
...AND BOOST YOUR SEX DRIVE A BIT AS WELL SUPPOSEDLY...
I WONDER IF IT REALLY WORKS ?
Eh?
I LOVE YOU.!
EH?!
AKIRA...
EH?!
TARGET 3...END

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Scans: amyused

Translation: fencer-x

Editing: fencer-x, flutterwithoutwind

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TARGET 4

I LOVE YOU...!
EH--
WAI--
CLATTER
JUST A--
UWAH!
SLAM

AKIRA...
NO WAY.
rush
shove
UP?!
C-C-CALM DOWN, CHIHI-RO!!
HERE, GET UP!
THERE'S A CAR WAITING FOR US OUTSIDE!
COME ON!! GET--

SFX SLAM
CHOP
UGH
ngh
Good grief
PHEW, THAT WAS CLOSE...!
AH!
SLUMP
Crap!! I knocked him out!
It was reflex
CHI--CHIHIRO?!
HANG IN THERE!!
THUMP
THUMP
slap
slap
urg

exhausted
WHAT THE HELL DID YOU DO?!
I'M SOWWY
WHAT... MORE SHITTY EX-CUSES?
S--BUT...
NO, SEE HE...
HE--HE JUST GRABBED ON TO ME AND S-SAID THAT HE LOVED ME, SO I...
UM, YOU SEE...

Pat
TAKA-NASH!
AND-- HE JUST MISTOOK ME FOR SOMEONE ELSE...?
B--BUT HE'D BEEN DRUGGED, SO THAT WAS THE REASON, RIGHT?
.....
YOU TWO OUGHT TO HAVE A NICE LONG TALK TOMORROW!
THIS ISN'T PART OF OUR JOB DESCRIP-TION, SEE!
SO WE'LL LEAVE IT TO THE PARTIES IN QUESTION!
EH?

WHAAAAAT?!
NGH
I'M... HOME?
Huh?
UMM
...
WAKE
realize...
!

burble
burble
CREAK
AKI-RA.
GOOD MOR-NING
Oh! HEY THERE
WANT SOME COFFEE?
AH...
SURE.
U

HEY, UMM...
ABOUT LAST NIGHT
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
OH--I'M BETTER
REALLY? THAT'S GOOD.
YOU AREN'T GOING TO SCHOOL TODAY, RIGHT?
GOT ANY PLANS...?
I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT THAT!
clatter
I MEAN ABOUT HOW I...
AH!
Hahaha!
YOU PASSED OUT SO I HAD HOSHI-SAN AND NEZU-SAN HELP DRAG YOU HOME!
IT WAS TOUGH GOING!
...CONFESSED TO YOU, RIGHT?
JOLT

BUT--YOU WERE JUST DRUNK!
IT WAS NOTHING SERI...
sob Arrugged
IT WAS SERI-OUS...
IT WASN'T JUST IDLE CHATTER.
I'M REALLY IN LOVE WITH YOU, AKIRA

W--
WAIT,
JUST--WAIT A MINUTE...
.....

BUT, WHY?
JUST--I GUESS I DON'T GET WHAT YOU MEAN...
I MEAN--ALL WE'VE EVER DONE IS TEXT BACK AND FORTH, RIGHT?
WHY WOULD YOU...

...IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH THAT ?
HUH?

IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG—WITH FALLING FOR YOU JUST BECAUSE OF THAT...?
Uwaah!!

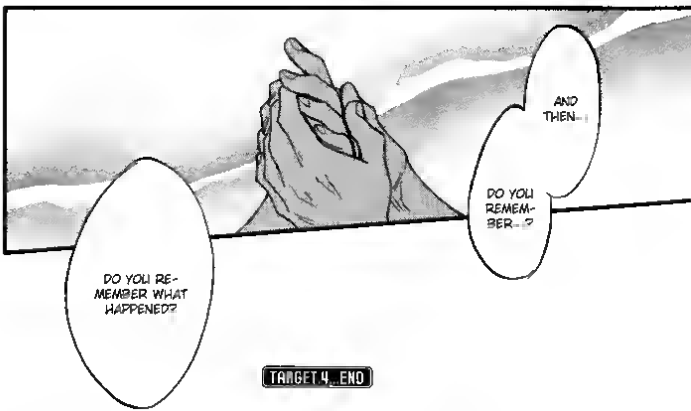
SFX: BADUMP

AKIRA
BADUMP
BADUMP
BADUMP
BADUMP
Wait-- I'm not supposed to be 'badump'-ing here!!
I mean, no matter how hot he may be, you're still...
Keep it together, me!!
kneel

I'VE...
...NEVER HAD A PLACE IN THAT HOUSE.
I WAS ALWAYS OFF BY MYSELF CRYING CONSTANTLY
THEN, ONE DAY,
ONE OF THE HOUSE STAFF WHO CARED FOR ME...
...SUGGESTED I SEND OFF A BALLOON AS A GAME.
IT WAS JUST A WAY TO DISTRACT ME FROM MY LONELINESS
AND I NEVER REALLY THOUGHT I'D ACTUALLY RECEIVE A REPLY
Hahaha
THOUGH I DID HOPE FOR ONE, STILL...

BUT THEN--
YOU RESPONDED
TO MY LETTER!
I WAS SO
HAPPY
AND AT
THAT
POINT
...I WAS SAVED.

YOU'RE THE ENTIRE REASON I'M THE PERSON I AM NOW, AKIRA


AND THEN—
DO YOU REMEMBER—?
DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED?

TARGET 4_END

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Scans: amyused

Translation: fencer-x

Editing: fencer-x, flutterwithoutwind

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TARGET.5

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CHIHIRO!
THIS WAY!

RI--
RIGHT!
HURRY UP!!
huff
huff
stub
WAH!
BE CARE-FUL!
LET'S GO!
grab

O-OKAY!
WOOOW...
RIGHT??
AWESOME, ISN'T IT?

YOU'RE GOING HOME TOMORROW, RIGHT?
I WANTED TO MAKE SURE I GOT TO TAKE YOU TO MY FAVORITE SPOT BEFORE THEN!
grin
ONLY MY ABSOLUTE CLOSEST FRIENDS KNOW IT!!

FRIEND

Hustle
TH—
THANK YOU!!

SFX: GRUNT+SNORT
フゴー
フゴー
EH?
CHARGE
IT'S COMING FOR US!
AAAH!!
AAH!
WAI--

SFX: DASH
EH?!
WAAH!!
CRAAAP!
RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!!
MP
stub
CHI-HIRO!!

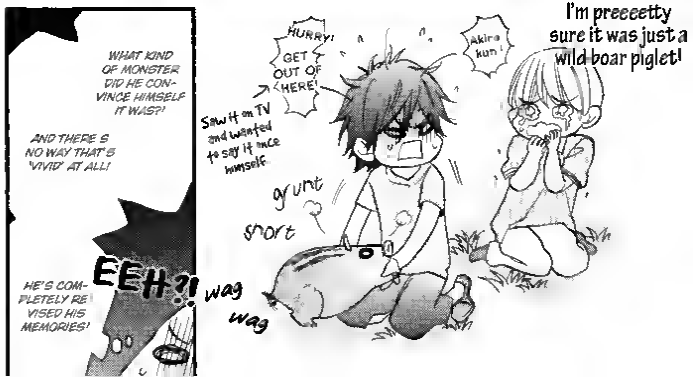
SFX: SHOVE

A--AKIRA-KU...
GET OUT OF HERE!
HURRY!!
LEAVE THIS TO ME! YOU RUN AWAY!
BACK THEN...

SO STRONG, SO GENTLE... AND SO BRAVE
...I THOUGHT YOU WERE REALLY AMAZING. I STILL REMEMBER IT SO VIVIDLY...
YOU WERE MY VERY FIRST LOVE, AKIRA.

WHAT.
WAIT.

Ooooh NOW I remember! It's all coming back to me now!
But--wait, if I recall correctly...
Did that... actually happen?
I feel like it may or may not have..
OH!


WHAT KIND OF MONSTER DID HE CONVINCE HIMSELF IT WAS?!
AND THERE'S NO WAY THAT'S "VIVID" AT ALL!
HE'S COMPLETELY REVISED HIS MEMORIES!
EEH?!
wag wag
HURRY! GET OUT OF THERE!
Saw it on TV and wanted to say it once himself
Akira kun!
I'm preeeetty sure it was just a wild boar piglet!
gyuni
snort

lean
FROM THAT MOMENT... YOU BECAME MY VERY BEST FRIEND
!!
MMF!
smooch
preeess...
CLATTER
NGH—
BEBEBEEP!

Note: The order is similar to a line from the movie, "Laputa: Castle in the Sky".

brrrr...
YES.
EX-CUSE ME?
...I UNDER-ST,AND.

IF KIICHI DOES NOT RETURN BY THE NEXT BOARD MEETING
THE POST CURRENTLY HELD BY KIICHI WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO CHIHIRO, THE NEXT IN LINE WITH INHERITANCE PRIVILEGES

!
EH?
BUT--
OJIISAN,
THAT'S--
--FAR
TOO RASH!
YIELDING THE
POST OF KIICHI-SAN,
YOUR SUCCESSOR,
TO CHIHIRO MEANS
THAT YOU'RE
FORMALLY ACKNOW-
LEDGING CHIHIRO AS
YOUR SUCCESSOR!

!!
FA-THER!
AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M DOING
WHAT OF IT?
YIIIKES, THEY'RE REALLY GOING AT IT IN THERE
HUH? BUT IT'S TOTALLY OUR BUSINESS!
dig dig
DON'T STICK YOUR NOSE WHERE IT HAS NO BUSINESS BEING, HOSHI
PROBABLY TALKING ABOUT CUTTING OFF KI-ICHI AND BRING-ING IN CHIHIRO, DON'TCHA THINK?

WHAT.
I THINK I'M GONNA QUIT THIS JOB...!
UMM, NO, I...
BUT WHY?
It's way too early! Are you looking down on us, ass?!
AH, WELL,
OVER THE COURSE OF OUR DISCUSSION...HE ACTUALLY FORMALLY CONFESSED TO ME, SOOO...
!
SERIOUSLY?!

OKAY
OH GOD, MY STOMACH HURTS NOW!
NEZU, YOU KEEP WATCH FOR A BIT
drag
UWAH!
BWAHA
HOSH! PIPE DOWN
OH WOW THAT'S A GOOD ONE!!
I CAN'T BE-LIEVE THAT GUY!
HAHAHA
...
CONK
HUH?!
I'LL GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT--
pa-kyuu!
MIND ACCEPTING HIS FEEL-INGS FOR YOU?

C'MON, IT'S FINE!
HE'S HOT, HE'S RICH, HE'S GOT HIS FUTURE ALL MAPPED OUT FOR HIM--AND HE'S IN LOVE WITH YOU!
Ooh!
THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO OBJECT AT ALL!
Amazing!
BUT WE'RE BOTH GUYS!
HEY--DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF!
IT'S NOT 'SMALL' TO ME.
Y'KNOW,
CHIHIRO'S BEEN BURDENED WITH THE OOBA NAME SINCE HE WAS JUST A LITTLE KID
I MENTIONED THIS BEFORE--BUT HE'S NEVER REALLY HAD ANY 'FRIEND'-LIKE FRIENDS
PEOPLE WOULD FLOCK TO HIM BECAUSE OF HIS NAME--OR INSTEAD AVOID HIM ALTOGETHER
NOT THAT YOU COULD BLAME 'EM.

AND ON TOP OF IT ALL--HIS BIRTH MOTHER DIED WHEN HE WAS 1 YEAR OLD. SO THE LADY IN THERE IS THE SECOND WIFE
THE THIRD BROTHER TETSUHITO IS HER SON
TO HER, THE TWO BROTHERS ABOVE HIM ARE JUST THORNS IN HER SIDE
AND SHE PARTICULARLY DESPISES CHIHIRO.
THE OLD MAN'S THE KIND OF CHARACTER YOU SAW-- AND HIS FATHER IS ALWAYS AWAY FOR WORK. HARDLY ANY CONTACT
HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY ALLIES INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THIS PLACE
AND HE'S LIVED IN THIS KIND OF HOUSE FOR AGES NOW.

BUT,
I DIGRESS
THE BODYGUARD ACCOMPANYING CHIHIRO BACK THEN COULDN'T JUST STAND BY AND DO NOTHING SO...
HE CAME UP WITH THE BALLOON
AND LUCKILY ENOUGH, IT FLEW FAR AND WIDE
AND FOUND YOU SEE?
Point
SHOCK
SURE-- JUST COINCIDENCE.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN FATE!
WHAT THE HECK!
THAT WAS JUST COINCIDENCE!

THE BODYGUARD HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN PLANNING ON *PRETENDING* THE BALLOON FOUND SOMEONE AND HAVING HIS OWN KID WRITE A LETTER.
THAT WAS THE PLAN, AT LEAST
BUT THEN *YOU* FOUND THE LETTER
JUST BY COINCIDENCE
RIGHT?
AND YOU WROTE HIM A RESPONSE
FROM THAT MOMENT...YOU TOOK HIM ON AS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.
TOOK *ON HIM*
YOU...
~~~
EVEN IF YOU *SAY* THAT I STILL...
WELL I CAN UNDERSTAND!
I GET IT REALLY!
IT'S ALL KINDS OF SCREWED UP, RIGHT?
BUT--JUST TRY THINKING ABOUT IT
~~~

THE VERY FIRST TIME CHIHIRO RECEIVED A LETTER FROM YOU,
IT WAS LIKE A DROP OF WATER FALLING IN A PARCHED DESERT...
AND SMALL THOUGH IT MAY HAVE BEEN, EVERY TIME HE CONNECTED WITH YOU LIKE THAT, IT WAS ANOTHER DROP AFTER DROP...
BUILDING UP OVER TIME... UNTIL IT BECAME THE SCENIC OASIS THAT LIES WITHIN CHIHIRO NOW...
WELL?
I'M QUITE THE POET, AREN'T I?
BE SURE TO REMEMBER IT! ♡
RIGHT WE'RE ON OUR WAY
BEEP BEEP

step
step
step
step
clench

KROOM...
HEY
YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD...
.....
HUH?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
OH...
YEAH, FINE.

brush
tremble
CAN WE... SIT LIKE THIS FOR A BIT, THOUGH?

HIS HANDS ARE COLD...
"YOU..."
"...TOOK ON HIM."
"YOU TOOK HIM ON AS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY."
I just...

...can't possibly do that!

NOW'S MY CHANCE!
THEY WORK IN SHIFTS AT NIGHT, SO THERE'S ONLY ONE...
PLUS HE'S ON THE PHONE, SO HE'S NOT ON GUARD.
dash
Chihi-ro...
I'm sorry.
KNOCK
HEY, AKIRA? CAN WE TALK?
...ARE YOU A- SLEEP?

If you're in pain, then of course I want to help.
CREAK
But that's..
?
CLATTER
RATTLE
SLAM

...only if it's as a friend,
and if you want anything more than that, I'm afraid I can't give it to you
dash
But I know I can't be selfish like this forever,
So...
I'm sorry.

step...

SHOCK
AH--
UWAH!
TARGET 5 END

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Scans: amyused

Translation: fencer-x

Editing: fencer-x, flutterwithoutwind

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TARGET 6

Here ya go! Anko bread!
Keep yer chin up!
Poooor thing.. and so young..
hic
hic
hic
...
Sigh
RIP
I mean sure.. I'm starving and I AM grateful, but still
Rustle
I SEEM TO HAVE GOTTEN MYSELF BLESSED ...

When I first moved here...
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT
munch
munch
I MANAGED TO GET AWAY BUT ALL THE TRAINS HAVE STOPPED RUNNING, AND EVEN IF I PAY FOR A TICKET I WON'T BE ABLE TO AFFORD TO BUNK AT A MANGA CAFE
If Chihiro hadn't helped me out...
I NEED THE BIG GEST FA VOR OF LIFE!
...I'd have wound up in the state I'm in now.
I won-der...
...if he's read the letter yet...
throb

STEP
!!
HEY, ASS-HOLE.
I--I'M NOT A VIRGIN!!
WAIT...
HUH?
HO-SHI-SAN?!
VIRGIN.
MORON
SQUID BRAIN
THUD
sole of his foot
WHY ARE YOU ?
ANYONE CAN EASILY READ YOUR MOVE-MENTS IDIOT.
EH?!
SERI-OUSLY?

I--I'M GOING BACK TO MY PARENTS PLACE
I KNOW WE DISCUSSED THINGS BUT I JUST CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT...
TAKANASHI AKIRA.
WAS CHIHIRO STILL IN HIS ROOM WHEN YOU LEFT?
HUH?
OH YEAH
I SEE THANKS
NEZU? HOW'RE THINGS LOOKING?
...OK
Snap
ALL RIGHT. I'M ON MY WAY.
I'M FINISHED HERE.
UMM--
DID... SOMETHING HAPPEN?
CHIHIRO'S DISAPPEARED.

IT'S NONE OF YOUR CONCERN ANYMORE, RIGHT?
BUT-- WHY?!
IS HE OKAY?!
SNAP
WHAT DO YOU CARE?
YOU THREW HIM AWAY, AFTER ALL
!
JUST TO CHECK.
IF CHIHIRO WAS STILL IN HIS ROOM WHEN YOU LEFT, THEN IT MUST HAVE BEEN AFTER THAT THAT HE WENT OUT HIMSELF.
BUT--CHIHIRO DOESN'T TYPICALLY LEAVE HIS APARTMENT ALONE.
BUT,
THEN--
WHY DID YOU COME LOOKING FOR ME?
clench

HE WAS IN A PANIC AND DID SOMETHING HE WOULDN'T NORMALLY DO
IN OTHER WORDS,
HE LEFT BEHIND HIS CELL PHONE, WALLET, EVERYTHING.
SHIT.
realize
AH
Am I an idiot...?!
What
YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND, AKIRA!

TO FIND HIM!
I'LL--
--GO GET HIM!
HEY! WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU GOING?
dash
...have I done?!
AND JUST...
WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO FIND HIM?
IT'S A WASTE OF TIME RUNNING AROUND WITHOUT A CLUE AS TO WHERE HE IS, RIGHT?
AH!
MORON.
AND ANOTHER THING--
CRUNCH
IF YOU'RE INTENDING ON GETTING INVOLVED WITH THOSE HALF-ASSED FEELINGS, GET LOST.
IF YOU'RE GOING BACK TO HIM, DON'T YOU DARE DO THIS AGAIN.
OTHERWISE I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU.

RIGHT!
HUH? LIKE WHAT?
CHECK OUT YOUR SHOES LATER. YOU MIGHT FIND SOMETHING INTERESTING!
A GPS TRANS-MITTER?
SO EA-SILY MANI-PULATED
SIR, YES SIR!
THAT'S YES SIR, MAG-GOT!
fwoosh
EH?!
THAT'S CHIHIRO'S CURRENT LOCATION
YES
YOU SEE THAT MARK-ER ON THE SCREEN?

TH-THEN WE JUST NEED TO GO TO THIS LOCATION RIGHT?
YEAH, BUT THERE'S A LITTLE PROBLEM, SEE
WHOA.
CRAZY!
OR WELL ACTUALLY IT'S INSIDE OF HIM
IN HIS MOLAR
HE'S GOT A GPS TRANSMITTER ON HIM, FOR JUST IN CASE
HUH?!
HE WAS PROBABLY FORCIBLY TAKEN THERE
BUT--
EH?
HE'LL BE FINE THEY WON'T TAKE HIS LIFE
AND WELL, WE'VE GOT A GOOD IDEA OF WHO'S RESPONSIBLE
THEN SHOULD WE REALLY BE TAKING THINGS SO LIGHTLY NOW?!

NEZU!
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS SUDDEN INTRUSION?
SLAM
MADAME!
MY APOLOGIES, BUT IT'S AN EMERGENCY
EMERGENCY?
I DARE NOT WASTE ANY TIME
I'LL GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT--
PLEASE ADVISE THEM TO RELEASE CHIHIRO-SAMA IMMEDIATELY.
WHA...
!
TETSUHITO?!
I HAPPENED TO OVERHEAR YOUR CONVERSATION.
MOTHER...
I'M SORRY I SPILLED
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

I DON'T WANT YOU...
...TO DIRTY YOUR HANDS JUST FOR ME.
TETSUHITO...!
YES THIS IS NEZU
YOU'RE... TETSUHITO-SAMA...?
!
Yup that's me
I'm in a hurry, so I'll get to the point
MY MOM SENT SOME GUYS OVER YOUR WAY IT SEEMS
PROBABLY JUST SOME GOOD-FOR-NOTHING PUNKS
tap tap tap
I THINK SHE WANTS TO KEEP HIM FROM SHOWING UP FOR THE BOARD MEETING
It's stupid.
I went out of my way to tell you this, so you'd better fix it.
!

I'M FINE WITH TAKING THINGS SLOWLY. IT'S A PAIN IN THE ASS OTHERWISE
PLUS—
IF I WANT TO STAND AT THE TOP, I'LL TAKE IT MYSELF.
UNDERSTAND?
I DON'T WANT TO GET CAUGHT UP IN HER CRAZY SCHEMES
Well, good luck!
click
...
Feigning innocence, are we?
IDIOT!
HUH?!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
HOWEVER,
DESPITE YOUR GENEROUS WARNING AND OUR BEST EFFORTS CHIHIRO-SAMA STILL MANAGED TO DISAPPEAR
WE'LL OF COURSE RECEIVE ANY PUNISHMENT YOU DEEM FIT AT A LATER TIME
RIGHT NOW, I HAVE HOSHI AND TAKANASHI ON THEIR WAY TO CHIHIRO-SAMA'S LOCATION.
THE REST IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME, NOW.
HOWEVER, I DO HOPE WE CAN AVOID ANY UNNECESSARY BATTLES

WE'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO KNOW ABOUT THIS RIGHT NOW
MADAME
YOU CAN STILL MAKE IT IN TIME
PLEASE RELEASE HIM...!
MO-THER
Hustle
SO, WHADYA THINK?
HUH? BOUT WHAT?
THINK IT'LL GO WELL?
HMM... WELL, HE LIKES TO ACT ACCORD-ING TO PLAN.

Hush
Hmhmhm...
Seriously?
IF THINGS GO PEAR-SHAPED, LET'S HAUL ASS OUTTA HERE 'KAY?
I'VE GOT A GOOD NOSE FOR THAT KIND OF THING!
SORRY WE HAD TO BE SO ROUGH...
'S IT HURT?
...
WELL-- WE'RE NOT GONNA LAY A HAND ON YA SO LONG AS YOU KEEP CALM LIKE THAT!
IN FACT, WE'LL TAKE REAL GOOD CARE OF YOU!
YOU'RE OUR SPECIAL GUEST, AFTER ALL.
WE'LL SEND YOU HOME A-GAIN JUST AS SOON AS WE FINISH OUR BUSINESS

BEBEEP
OOH!
BEBEEP
Still, something seems...
Which means these people must be working for HER.
Must be the board meeting...
"Finish our business"?
CLANG
BEEP
YEEES?
A CALL FROM OUR GODDESS!
HERE IT IS!
The situation has changed.
The plan is canceled
Hmph
I SEE...
WEREN'T WE SUPPOSED TO HANG ON TO HIM FOR A FEW MORE DAYS ..?
Huh?
RELEASE THAT MAN RIGHT AWAY.
IT'S ME

HUH?
OH--
I'LL PAY YOU EVERYTHING WE AGREED UPON.
THEN,
HOW MANY TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEN WILL YOU PAY ME FOR HIM?
Of course you will.
I'm not talking about the compensation.
!
Then what are you...
COME NOW, MA'AM
WHILE I MIGHT NOT KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE, I CAN AT LEAST FIGURE OUT THAT YOU AND THIS GUY ARE LOADED
WE DON'T NEED MUCH, JUST SHOW US A LITTLE FAVOR!

Geez FIG-URES
WHA
OKAY
GO!
Hehehe!
HUH?
SNAP
CRACK
CRUNCH
GET OUT HERE, MONKEY!

SFX: LANDING THUD
!?
WAH!
HE CAME FROM THE CEILING?!
NO WAY!
WHAT THE...

UWAH!
SWEEP
Y--
THUD
YOU BAS-
TARD!
SFX SLAM

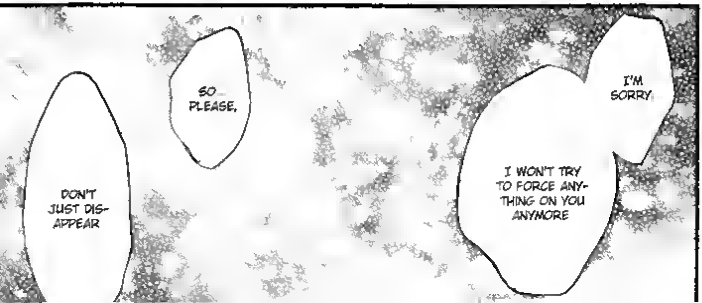
WHY YOU...
GRAB
CHOP
GYA!!
SFX: WOOSH
SNAP
CRUNCH
POP
FREEZE
...
SLUMP
EEK!

KEEP USING SOMETHING THIS CRAPPILY MADE AND IT'LL WIND UP GOING OFF ON ITS OWN ONE DAY
IDIOT
A MODDED GUN?
HUH?
toss
fall
Yes sir
A.
AKIRA...?

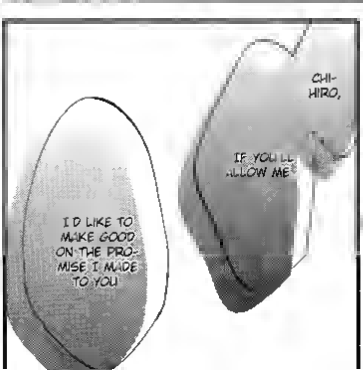
RIP
RIP
AH...
HUH?
THANK YOU...
sniff
DON'T THANK ME...
I'M NOT... THE KIND OF GUY YOU THINK I AM...
...SAY THAT.
I'M ALL TALK...
--AND JUST RUN AWAY WHEN THINGS GET TOUGH
I CAUSE YOU NOTHING BUT TROUBLE...
AND YOU ALWAYS FORGIVE ME...
AND YET...

I'M A HORRIBLE PERSON!
I STILL RAN AWAY AND HURT YOU...
AND THEN THIS HAPPENED
YOU'RE HERE WITH ME RIGHT NOW, RIGHT?
...THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL

YOU SAVED ME...!
I READ THE LETTER YOU WROTE
AND KNEW I COULDN'T BLAME YOU.
I JUST GOT FLUSTERED AND NEVER ONCE STOPPED TO THINK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS.


I'M SORRY.
I WON'T TRY TO FORCE ANYTHING ON YOU ANYMORE
SO... PLEASE,
DON'T JUST DISAPPEAR

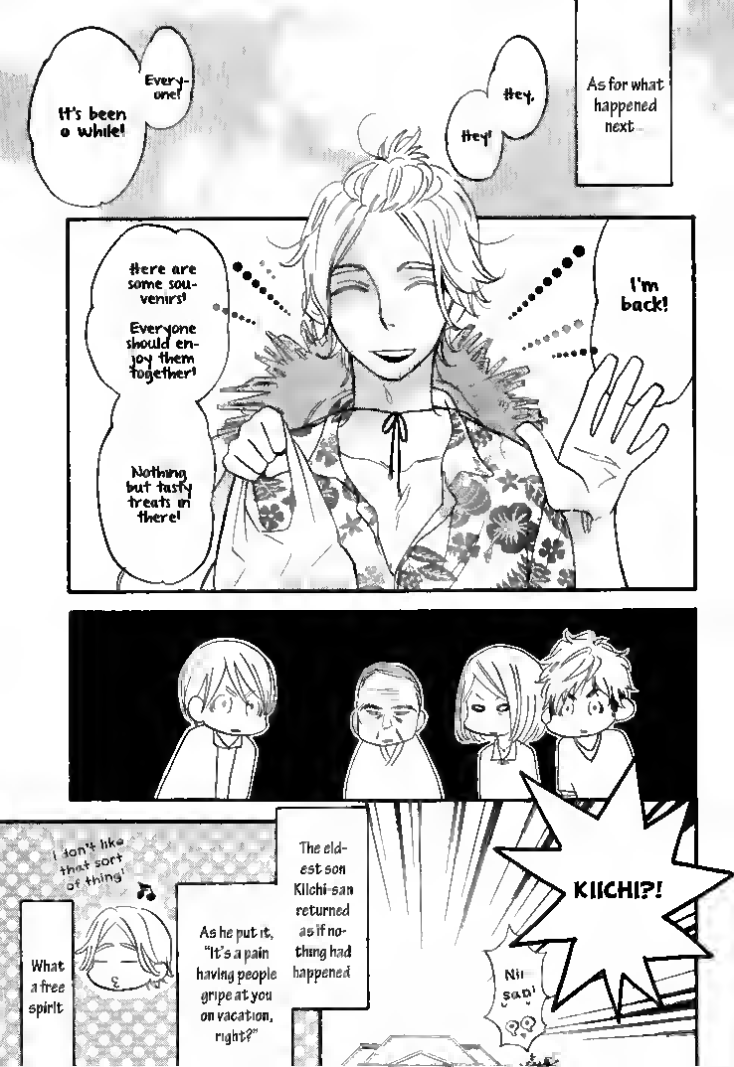
PLEASE STAY WITH ME!


CHI-HIRO,
IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME
I'D LIKE TO MAKE GOOD ON THE PROMISE I MADE TO YOU

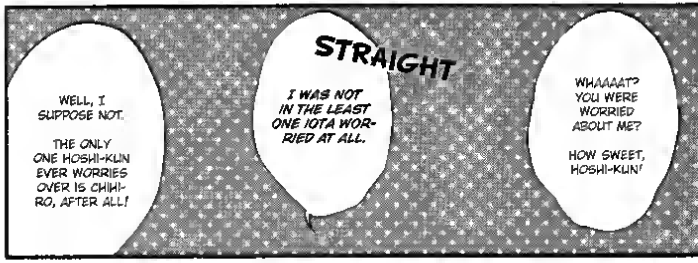
SIGH
ARGH.
YOU'VE GOT IT WRONG!
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BE SO...

gentle
I SHALL PROTECT YOU.
THIS TIME, I SWEAR I WILL
UNTIL YOU TELL ME I DON'T HAVE TO ANYMORE.

AKIRA!!
UWAH!
AKIRA
AKIRA
AKIRA
AKIRA...
squeeze
And then...
WHAT?!
HUH?
CAN WE GET A CLEAN-UP CREW HERE...?
OH, NEZU


As for what happened next...
Hey.
Hey!
Everyone!
It's been a while!
I'm back!
Here are some souvenirs!
Everyone should enjoy them together!
Nothing but tasty treats in there!
KIICHI?!
Nii-san!
The eldest son Kiichi-san returned as if nothing had happened
As he put it, "It's a pain having people gripe at you on vacation, right?"
I don't like that sort of thing!
What a free spirit

NO WONDER WE HAD NO CLUE WHERE HE'D GONE OFF TO...
HE REALLY SCREWED US OVER...
Eesh
DON'T SWEAT IT!
YOU CAN ALWAYS STICK A-NOTHER IN IF YOU NEED TO!
Tee hee!
OH, MY MOLAR?
I HAD IT REMOVED!


WELL, I SUPPOSE NOT.
THE ONLY ONE HOSHI-KUN EVER WORRIES OVER IS CHIHIRO, AFTER ALL!
STRAIGHT
I WAS NOT IN THE LEAST ONE IOTA WORRIED AT ALL.
WHAAAAT? YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME?
HOW SWEET, HOSHI-KUN!

The Ooba blood runs strong in this guy...
...or so says Nezu...
He's suited to ruling others
I wonder if Tatsuhito san can beat him
YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER IN THAT RESPECT
WRACKING YOUR MIND FOR YOUR EMPLOYER,
TRYING EVERY POSSIBLE ANGLE...
YOU REALLY ARE SUITED FOR SERVING OTHERS
...MAYBE MAYBE NOT

AKIRA!
WAKE UP! IT'S MORNING NOW!
And
As for us...
SMOOCH
Ah!
HEY--CUT IT OUT, CHIHIRO!
IT'S FINE AS A MORNING GREETING, RIGHT?
GUH...
RIGHT? ♡

Lately from time to time...
...I've started finding Chihiro's smile kind of cute
Though I don't think I should tell him so...
YUP...
STILL SO EASILY MANIPULATED
OH?
THANK YOU!!
snatch
AH AKIRA!
YOU'VE GOT RICE ON YOUR CHEEK!
TARGET 6 END

Chihiro's sleeping beside me right now
BADUMP
We've had nights like this recently, and it's not a big deal, but...
BADUMP
BADUMP
BADUMP
Tonight I feel... strange
BADUMP
BADUMP
BADUMP
Just weird
BADUMP

I'm...
I...
What am I doing...
Wh...
Close
THUMP
I CAN HEAR HIM...
THUMP
HM?
THUMP
THUMP
Sigh
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP

BAM
AKIRA...?
SFX SIT UP
I WAS HALF-ASLEEP, AND I--
UWAH! N--NO, THIS IS JUST, UMM--
CHU
BUT YOUR HEART'S RACING! AKIRA...
!

...!!
SLIP
AH...
tremble
WAIT, DON'T...

...YOU WANT ME TO STOP?
N--
NO, I ACTUALLY *DON'T* WANT YOU TO STOP...
JUST...
I'M...
FEELING REALLY STRANGE...

OH--HE WON'T ANSWER TONIGHT...
HUH?
brrrrr...
brrrrr...
HE'S NOT PICKING UP WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING...?
DA
DA
I SLIPPED THIS IN HIS GLASS OF WATER WHEN WE LEFT EARLIER!
YOU--THAT'S--
GEH!
WONDER WHAT HE'S GETTING UP TO NOW!

YOU DON'T WANT TO...?
IT--
IT'S NOT LIKE I DON'T WANT TO B-B-B-BUT...!!
I WONDER IF THIS IS REALLY ALL RIGHT...
WAI--CHIHI-ROP!
ARE YOU SERIOUSLY GONNA..
WELL, IF I DIDN'T DRUG HIM, THEY'D NEVER GET ANYWHERE!
That's virgin!
番外編 END

september.strawberrymilk.org

Scans: amyused

Translation: fencer-x

Editing: fencer-x, flutterwithoutwind